## THE DAILY EVENING TELEGRAPH-PHILADELPHIA, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 1870.

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## SHAKESPEARE ON BEAUTY. m the London Saturday Review.

The admiration that we render to the genius of Shakespeare is not all consciously paid. Perhaps it is, quite as often as not, unconscious. As with a great building, so with a great genins, wherever excellence or curiosity in the parts is lost in the harmony or perfectness of the whole, admiration is unconsciously or tacitly expressed. In Shakespeare, overpowered by his dramatic force and completeness, we often lose sight of his reasoning ability and his analytical acuteness. No man leaves behind him in quantity so large an intellectual legacy as Shakespeare left, especially when the quality is rare and the variety great, without having put on record incidentally many marks of the detailed workings of his mind; and not only of his special intellectual processes or principles, but also of his tastes and sympathies. But who can say much on these mat-ters respecting Shakespeare ? Who does not feel himself to be better informed about the likes and dislikes of Falstaff, Romeo, Othello, or even Hamlet, than he is about the views and sentiments of their originator? The reason is that the genius of Shakespeare was not only profoundly dramatic, but profoundly . faithful to dramatic requirement. And thus he becomes individually lost; lost doubly, in the completeness and the va-riety of his dramatic creations. But though lost to surface study and undiscriminating observation-lost, in short, to that hasty and unsatisfactory character known as the "general reader"-there is no

reason why he should not be found, if carefully searched after. In other words, the works of Shakespeare do actually contain traces, more or less distinct, of what he thought and felt on a great variety of sub-jects, and by setting these indications side by side a united whole may be gained which tells us a good deal about his mind and heart in this or that. We propose in these remarks to examine how he wrote, and to infer as nearly as may be how he thought, on the subject of personal beauty.

We think it was Lord Chesterfield who once described personal beauty as "a good letter of introduction." Good looks certainly do the work of such letters very well in a great number of instances; but the description will be felt to be mean, feeble, and inadequate. Shakespeare would not have endured it for a moment. He might have put it for dramatic purposes into the month of a calculating Iago or a cynical Jaques; but it is the last thing that he himself would have accepted as a description of beauty, for his thoughts ran altogether on another level. They may not win general acceptance just now. It is possible that they may incline some readers to ask, as George III once asked of Miss Burney (in confidence), "Was there ever such stuff as great part of Shakespeare ?" But they are, notwithstanding, on a level which no one would be the worse for trying to reach once more. Beauty, in his conception, was, in the first place, one of the great prime gifts of life. He is continually given to rank it among these. He classes it with

Wit, Wit, High birth, vigor of bone, desert in service, Love, friendship, charity,

with education, youth, honesty, worth, courage and wisdom. Like all of these, it is to be regarded more as a trust than as a gift. It may be disfigured and wasted, a thing which it is criminal to allow; or increased and which it is not a matter o

## "The crisped anaky golden locks Which make such wanton gambols with the wind ed fairness, Upon suppose when all the while they are dissevered from what was their original and source of life-

"the skull that bred them in the sepulchre."

These with Shakespeare are no transient whimsical phrases. They are his habitual thoughts. They are put into the mouths of the most varied characters, and they are intensified by some of his most powerful writing. They differ from the Platonic and Spenserian phantasies so pleasantly dis-coursed upon by Charles Lamb in the essay on Mrs. Conrady. Delicate and true as these are, there is an air of ingeniousness about them by reason of which they strike less directly home. In them the virtuous soul is the cause of a beautiful exterior, provided always that the material is plastic enough. But the doctrine that the exterior beauty is proportioned to the internal intellectual light is too glaringly contrary to facts to be impressive; and the saving provision that some material is so obstinate that it cannot be worked upon is too general and too elastic. In Shakespeare the beautiful exterior is not attempted to be accounted for; but the laws of its life and death, its durability and decay, are delineated with a fineness and precision of thought which genius might inspire, but which nothing but virtuous soundness of nature could dictate and render habitual.

If, however, we have mentioned Spenser's "Hymne in Honour of Beautie," with a slightly unfavorable contrast on a particular point, it is impossible to end without stopping again to extol it. There is one thought pervading it in which the two great Elizabethan contemporaries could not but agree-in which perhaps all the greatest mediaval and modern poets have agreed-and that is, the immortality of beauty. The line in Keats-

## A thing of beauty is a joy for ever-

has performed such severe and unremitting duty as a quotation that we are ashamed once more to recall it. But perhaps it is not very common to recollect that the words, and the whole passage where they stand, indicate a thought which is instinctive in natures of a certain degree of feeling and perception, and which has been seized and embodied by the loftiest minds in their loftiest moods. Keats is possessed pri-marily by the thought of the abiding *effoct* of things beautiful; but he also conveys what Shakespeare and Spenser and Milton express again and agoin-the idea of permanancy in beauty itself, its association in the mind, not with what is transient, but with what is eternal. We all know what it is to grudge even the passing of a beautiful day-

The dew shall weep to fall to-night, For thou must die

we wish to hold fast the "shapes of sky or plain;" and, moved by a stronger instinct still, we cannot lose without unwillingness the present light and glory of personal human beauty. Permanency is not only the thought or emotion of reflecting minds on fronting beauty; it is more than that; it is the blind intuition even of natures that never were and never will be able to compass in thought such abstractions as beauty or permanency at all. Reflection. stimulated, perhaps, rather than dulled by frequent loss and familiar disappointment, casts about to find what the elements of permanency may be, and the great poets, "in clear dream and solemn vision," have found it, and declare it to be the prime germ of beauty -its life and soul. Call it what you willgrace, virtue, goodness-this "luce intellectual, piena d'amore" is the real remedy of loss or of decay in beauty, the guarantee of perpetnity; it casts "a beam upon the outward

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Special attention given to the Purchase and Sale of Bonds and Stocks on Commission, at the Board o Brokers in this and other cities.	This Ship Canal—after five years labor and an ex- penditure of nearly a million of dollars, besides nearly half a million more for machinery and equip- ments—is nearly finished, and will be entirely com-	DEALERS IN ALL GOVERNMENT SECURI	will hereafter be held EVERY MONDAY. Sale at No. 2116 Green street.
INTEREST ALLOWED ON DEPOSITS.	pleted the present season. The tolls on the present commerce of Lake Supe- rior would not only pay the interest on these bonds,	DRAW BILLS OF EXCHANGE AND ISSUE COMMERCIAL LETTERS OF CREDIT ON THE	AND GLASSWARE, ETC.
COLLECTIONS MADE ON ALL POINTS. GOLD AND SILVER BOUGHT AND SOLD.	but large dividends also to the Stockholders. This trade will be increased immensely next season when the grain from the great wheat-producing regions of Minnesota shall pass by this route (as it neces-	ISSUE TRAVELLERS' LETTERS OF CREDIT ON LONDON AND PARIS, evaluable throughout	On Wednesday Morning, September 14, at 10 o'clock, at No. 2116 Gree street, above Twenty-first, by eatalogue, the enti- superior household furniture. 98 55
RELIABLE RAILROAD BONDS FOR INVEST- MENT.	sarily must) to the seaboard, by way of the railroad	Will collect all Coupons and Interest free of charge for parties making their financial arrangements	AT AUCTION.
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BOUGHT AND SOLD. Stocks Bought and Sold on Commis-	due, has executed a mortgage to the Enion Trust Company, of New York, as Trustee, upon the whole of its Ealingaid and branches, navalie on the direct does	Dealers in U.S. Bonds Membersof	snited to this trade. Catalogues ready day previous to sale. 996 Sale on the Premises, No. 1215 Green street.
sion Oaly. Accounts received and Interest allowed on Daily	COUPON BONDS of \$1000 each will be issued, with interest at Seven per centum per annum, paya- ble semi-annually, on the first day of January and	and Letters of Credit available throughout Europe;	SUPERIOR MODERN RESIDENCE AND FURN TURE, On Thesday Morning, September 20, at 10 o'clock, on the premises, w be sold that very superior and well-built three-sto
Balances, subject to check at sight. DE HAVEN & BRO.,	\$1000, \$5000, and \$10,000 each, without coupons, with interest at Seven per centum per annum, payable quarterly, on the first day of January, April, July, and October, in each year, principal and interest payable at the office of the Union Trust Company in	ENGINES, MACHINERY, ETO.	brick residence, with attles and three-story brid back buildings and lot of ground, 17 feet front at Si feet deem situate on the north side of Green stree
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GLENDINNING, DAVIS & AMORY,	No. 39 SOUTH THIRD STREET, PEILADELPHIA.	1 No. 42 N. FIFTH Street	$N, B, -A \text{ superior class of furniture at private sales of the superior class of the superior sup$
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caprice, but a duty. Whatever view may be held about the Sonnets in general, no one who knows well that exquisite and difficult series of poems will have much doubt that the reiterated injunctions to perpetuate the great endowment of beauty by transmission, which abound in the first twenty or thirty sonnets, are something more than the expression of a wish regarding a particular case, and represented general and permanent persussions.

Like other prime personal faculties or acquisitions, beauty is also, in Shakespeare's view, a potent influencer. It is sometimes mysteriously powerful for evil.

Beauty is a witch Against whose charms faith melteth into blood, It "provoketh thieves sooner than gold: it

often makes women proud, and men effeminate. On the other hand, it can and ought to exercise a sovereignty for good-sovereignty, because it is itself hedged round with a kind of regal divinity.

Beauty's princely majesty is such, Confounds the tongue and makes the senses rough. If it drove Angelo into insane and reckless villany, it more often "reclaims the tyrant," and wins "respect" and "privilege." It can shame the purse-proud into submission, and

it can annihilate time. A withered hermit, five-score winters worn, Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye; Beauty doth varnish age, as if newborn, And gives the crutch the cradle's infancy.

We have so far spoken only of the relations and the influence of beauty. There is no dramatic poet who writes so clearly, so consistently (within reasonable limits), and so nobly as Shakespeare does about its nature and quality. Every now and then it suits him to write hyperbolically, as when the servant in Troilus and Cressida calls, not beauty in the abstract only, but the actual embodied Helen, "love's invisible soul." But Shakespeare's own thought and feeling about the nature of beauty was exactly the opposite of this. A score of passages show that he habitually conceived of it as a kind of semi-corporeal essence, the soul or vital principle of which is goodness. We do not care to inquire how far this was due to the higher influences of Euphuism, or to the mysticism of Italian poets. For, like everything else that he touched, he had made these thoughts essentially his own; and they had been removed by him (though at this time of day they may look almost too delicate for common use) out of the region of the transcendental, and worked into the relations of actual and practical life. In Measure for Measure, the loftiest in some respects of all the Shakspearian dramas, the Duke tells Isabella that "the goodness that is cheap in beanty (in other and less apposite words, venality in beauty) makes beauty brief in goodness (short-lived); but grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it fair forever." Antonio, in Twelfu Night, mistaking Viola for Sebastian, and bitterly believing himself disowned, tells the supposed fair traitor that he has "done good feature shame :

"In nature there's no blemish but the mind : None can be called deformed out the unkind; Virtue is beauty; but the beauteous evil Are empty trunks o'erflourished by the devil."

Elizabeth of York, in a quick agony of suspense while discoursing with Richard of her daughter, talks in the same breath of "staining her beauty" and "corrupting her man-ners." Troilns dreams of constancy, the embodiment of goodness in many kinds, as

"Outliving beanty's outward, with a mind That doth renew swifter than blood decays." And the living death of false beauty is likened in Bassanio's lips to the display of borrowed tresses,

shape," And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence, Till all be made immortal.

And Shakespeare, whenever he has occasion to do more than merely transmit the name of beauty through his verse, is never far from thoughts like these. He is always ready to pass from the outward to the inward; from the form to the idea; from the corporeal reflection to the inextinguished ray which

Is heavenly-born and cannot die,

-		a parcell of the purest skie	Be	
UN		LUMBER.		
Bough	1870	SPRUCE JOIST. SPRUCE JOIST. HEMLOCK. HEMLOCK.	1870	
	1870	BASONED CLEAR PINE. BASONED CLEAR PINE. HOICE PATTERN PINE. SH CEDAR, FOR PATTE RED CEDAR.	1870 BPA	
Bou	1870	FLORIDA FLOORING. FLORIDA FLOORING. CAROLINA FLOORING. VIRGINIA FLOOMING. DELAWARE FLOORING. ASH FLOORING. WALNUT FLOORING. 'LORIDA STEP BOARDS. RAIL PLANK.	1870	
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Balanc	1870 RDS,	SEASONED POPLAR. SEASONED CHERRY. ASH, E OAK PLANK AND BO! HICKORY.	1870 WH	
No.	1870 <sub>DS</sub>	CIGAR BOX MAKERS' CIGAR BOX MAKERS' NISH CEDAR BOX BOAB FOR SALE LOW,	1870 <sub>s</sub>	
	1870	CAROLINA SCANTLING. CAROLINA H. T. SILLS. NORWAY SCANTLING.	1870	
TO S	1870	CEDAR SHINGLES, CYPRESS SHINGLES, MAULE, BROTHER NO. 2500 SOU	1870	
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GLEI	Wood Mouldings, Brackets and General Turning Work, Hand-rall Balusters and Newel Posts. [91 3m A LARGE ASSORTMENT ALWAYS ON HAND.			
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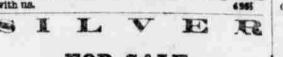
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